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ILLINOIS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
COUNCIL

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Honorable Dan Elliot, Chairman  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street, SW  
Suite 1220  
Washington, DC 20423-0001

RE: Docket No. EP 705

Chairman Elliot-

The Illinois Chamber of Commerce, representing thousands of Illinois businesses and their employees, supports the preservation of a healthy, competitive freight network in the United States of America and encourages the Surface Transportation Board to pursue commonsense regulatory policies that will foster competition and growth.

Illinois is at the transportation crossroads of the nation and can boast intersections of many of the major freight railroads. In Illinois there are 44 freight railroads employing over 12,500 people. The freight railroads have played a critical role in keeping Illinois' economy afloat during the recent economic crisis by investing millions of dollars to upgrade their infrastructure. These voluntary and strategic investments have employed thousands at a time when government and other industries have been forced to lay workers off and slow their growth. Further, the freight railroads ship many tons of coal, grain and construction materials in a highly efficient, safe and environmentally friendly way.

It is critical to the State of Illinois that freight railroads continue to grow, put people to work and operate as good corporate citizens. The Illinois Chamber of Commerce supports balanced economic regulations that will foster this growth and keep railroads competitive nationwide.

Sincerely,

Gideon Blustein, Executive Director  
Illinois Chamber of Commerce, Infrastructure Council